

TAB

IN THE SPOT

Soviet Plot in Latin Lands

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The Soviet Union may, as Ambassador Averell Harriman indicates, long for peace in Viet Nam. But its actions in the Caribbean are a different story.

Consider some of these facts as developed in reports reaching Washington intelligence services.

With a large assist from Moscow, the number of training camps in Cuba for guerrillas and terrorists has jumped from ten in 1963 to more than thirty in 1965.

Communist guerrillas "graduated" from Cuban camps have managed to set up sub-guerrilla camps in Central America: two in Guatemala and at least one in Panama's Chiriqui province. After functioning for several months, these have been uncovered and closed down.

But as a Central American diplomat said: "We simply cannot tell for sure how many others may be secretly set up in the coming months and years."

Perhaps most disturbing of all is the growth of the Soviet Atlantic "fishing" fleet which

now plays a key role in smuggling Cuba-trained guerrillas into Latin America.

Although American relations with Mexico are generally good, officials here have privately expressed concern over the concentration of Russian and Cuban "fishing" fleets in Mexican territorial waters.

There have been, additionally, persistent reports of large scale Soviet-Cuban export of contraband weapons and subversive guerrillas via the Islas Mujeres of the Mexican coast. In this connection, a Guatemalan "guerrilla" trained in a Soviet camp in Cuba defected not so long ago and claimed that more than 300 Cuban-trained guerrillas had been smuggled into Guatemala and other Latin American countries via Islas Mujeres, Cozumel Island, and other Mexican coastal points.

Most worrisome of all to the Pentagon are persistent reports that several Soviet Golen II missiles have been emplaced in Cuban waters. These missiles have a 1500-mile range and could thus hit Washington, D.C. They can be launched from platforms

submerged below the surface.

And one thing we have learned from Viet Nam: the Russians are masters at camouflaging their missiles and even at creating dummy missile sites.

Let it be emphasized that the reports of the Golen II missiles are unconfirmed. By Pentagon definition, no Soviet missile exists anywhere unless it has been photographed twice.

But the U.S. government is sufficiently apprehensive to have sent groups of frogmen into the suspected areas in order to verify the reports. Unfortunately, these missions aborted. In one case, some of our frogmen were captured by Fidel Castro's forces.

Add to all this the presence of at least one Soviet submarine base in Cuba, and the noticeable increase of Russian oceanographic, barometric and space "research" in the Caribbean. Is there any doubt in anybody's mind that the aim of this intensified activity, guerrilla and otherwise, is to undermine the United States influence in this hemisphere?

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